

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner withdrew the rejections of pending claims 48-77 set forth in the Office Action mailed November 16, 2006. It is noted that Applicants canceled claims 1-47 in a previous communication. Additionally, the Examiner indicated that claims 48-77 were subject to an election of species requirement. Particularly, the Examiner identified three independent and/or distinct species with respect to the pending claims, and required Applicants to elect one of these species for prosecution on the merits.

Although Applicants do not necessarily agree with this requirement, Applicants elect, without traverse, the claims associated with Species 3 as defined in the Office Action. Upon review, Applicants believe that claims 48-51, 56, 58-61, 66, 68-71, and 76 correspond to this elected species. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request consideration of claims 48-51, 56, 58-61, 66, 68-71, and 76. Further, as noted by the Examiner, claims 48, 49, 56, 58, 59, 66, 68, 69, and 76, are generic to each of the three species identified in the Office Action. Applicants reserve the right to request examination of the non-elected claims that depend from, or otherwise require all of the elements of, one or more allowable generic claims, as provided by 37 C.F.R. § 1.141.

If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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